

SWI VAMPIRELLA

#1



Warren Ellis
Kevin Lau
FIN

WARREN ELLIS • KEVIN LAU

\$2.95 US • \$4.00 CANADA



"Once upon a time it was rumored that there was a ghost in the city, and people were very scared and worried about it... 'There is a ghost in Raskoomon! Don't go near it or you will be eaten up!'"

Ana Ishikawa is a renegade sohei—a warrior monk possessing incredible martial arts skill. She fights her battles in crimson garb and white face paint, when she is known as Shi, meaning "death" in Japanese. Unlike her sohei brethren, Ana also possesses a deep Christian faith that has sustained her through more heartbreak and bloodshed than any one life should contain. Ana has seen true evil before, but it has always been of the human variety...



ANA ISHIKAWA
"SHI"

Vampirella is a vampire, heir to a legacy of death and un-death that stretches back to the dawn of the human race. Now, she hunts the globe, exterminating others of her own kind on a grim quest to rid the world of the evil and suffering vampires bring. She has met many mortals in her years on this earth, but few have ever proved as formidable as a certain quiet and beautiful Japanese-American girl living in New York...



VAMPIRELLA

Peter DeNyse is a former NYPD Detective who was run out of the force after being framed for a crime. Undaunted, Pete carries on his mission of justice by protecting the poor and down-trodden—the city's outcasts. The word is out on the street that this ex-cop is the one to go to when no one else can help. Pete's thrown himself into some major conflicts before, but he's never been caught between two primal forces in quite this way...



PETE DENYSE

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"ONCE UPON A TIME, IT WAS RUMORED THAT THERE WAS A GHOST IN THE CITY, AND PEOPLE WERE VERY SCARED AND WORRIED ABOUT IT.... 'THERE IS A GHOST IN RASHOMON! DON'T GO NEAR IT OR YOU WILL BE EATEN UP!'"

I STILL HAVE A FEW FRIENDS IN THE POLICE. ONE OF THEM GAVE ME THIS AND A BAD XEROX OF THE FILE.

A WOMAN WHO'S KILLING THE DOWNTOWN CRIMINAL ELEMENT ONE BY ONE, DRINKING THEIR BLOOD, AND VANISHING LIKE A GHOST...


I KEEP THINKING I SHOULD DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, BUT...

... WHAT DO YOU THINK, ANA?


A HANNYA IN NEW YORK?

I DON'T THINK SO, PETER.




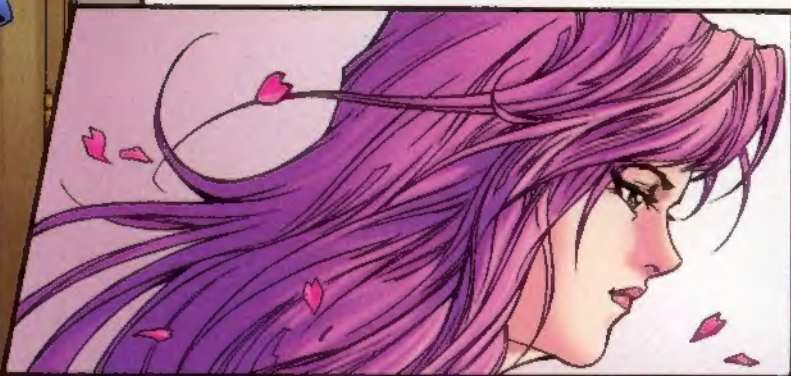


"ONCE UPON
A TIME, IT WAS
RUMORED THAT THERE
WAS A GHOST IN
THE CITY..."



THE CHILDREN'S
STORY OF RASHOMON.

HA.




"ON A QUIET AND RAINY NIGHT,
THE WARRIOR WATANABETSUNA
STRADDLED HIS HORSE AND
WENT ALONE TO RASHOMON..."

IN RASHOMON



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& COLORED BY ANSON LAM

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LETTERED BY ANTONIO TERRATTA
DESIGN BY MADA DESIGN
EDITED BY TONY REDARD
SHI CREATED BY WILLIAM TUCCI




ANA ISHIKAWA REMEMBERS THE STORY OF RASHOMON WELL FROM HER INFANT YEARS.


A STRANGE JAPANESE CHILDHOOD OF INSTILLED CHRISTIAN VALUES AND CREEPING GODLESS FOLK TALES.

SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT SHE'S DOING HERE. SOMETHING PUT A MATCH TO THE OLD BOXED TINDER OF HER HERITAGE.

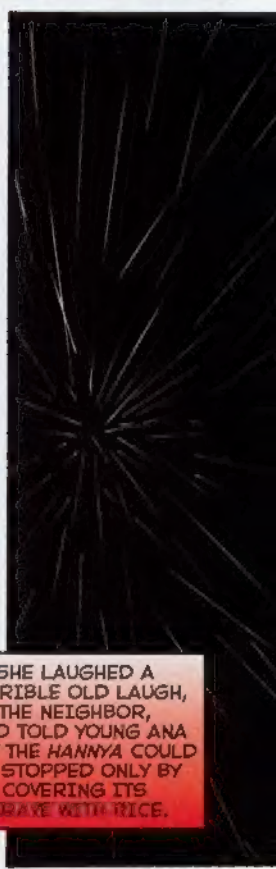
VAMPIRES; HER FAMILY ONCE TOOK IN AN OLD EUROPEAN WHITE MAN WHO TALKED ABOUT VAMPIRES.




HE TOLD YOUNG ANA, VERY SERIOUSLY, THAT ONLY THE GOOD CHRISTIAN CROSS COULD BRING SUCH A MONSTER DOWN.




THE VERY NEXT DAY, SHE TOLD AN ELDERLY NEIGHBOR ABOUT THIS.



SHE LAUGHED A TERRIBLE OLD LAUGH, THE NEIGHBOR, AND TOLD YOUNG ANA THAT THE HANNYA COULD BE STOPPED ONLY BY COVERING ITS GRAVE WITH RICE.

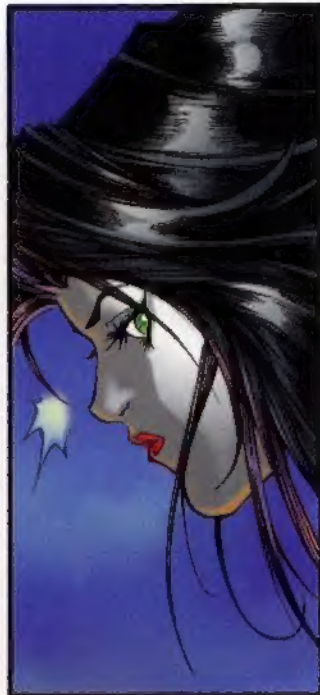


ANA ISHIKAWA IS A MODERN WOMAN. SHE KNOWS THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS VAMPIRES.



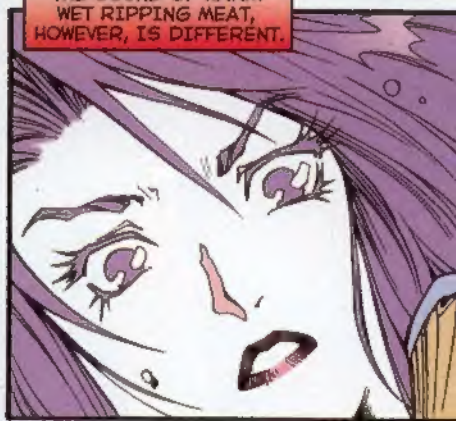
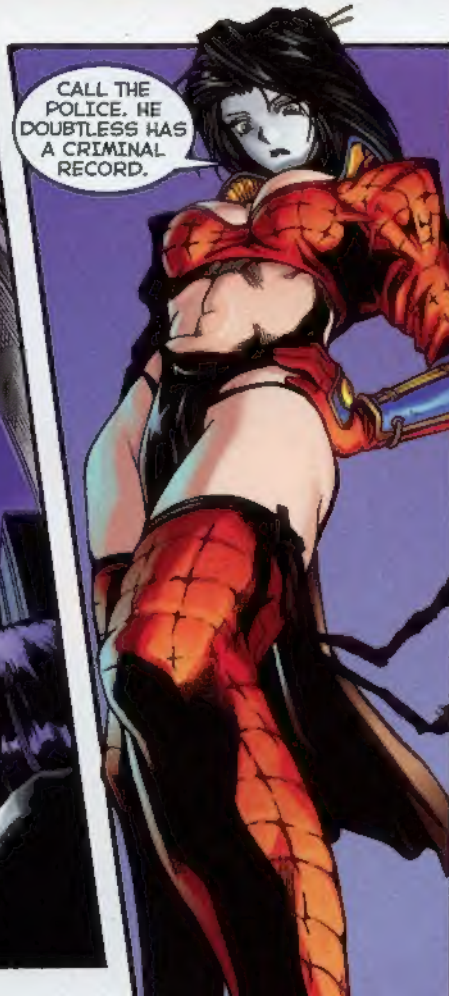
IT'S HER CHILDHOOD THAT HAS HER OUT OVER THE STREETS OF NEW YORK TONIGHT.

ANA DECIDES, WITH SUDDEN DISGUST, THAT IT'S PAST HER INNER CHILD'S BEDTIME.

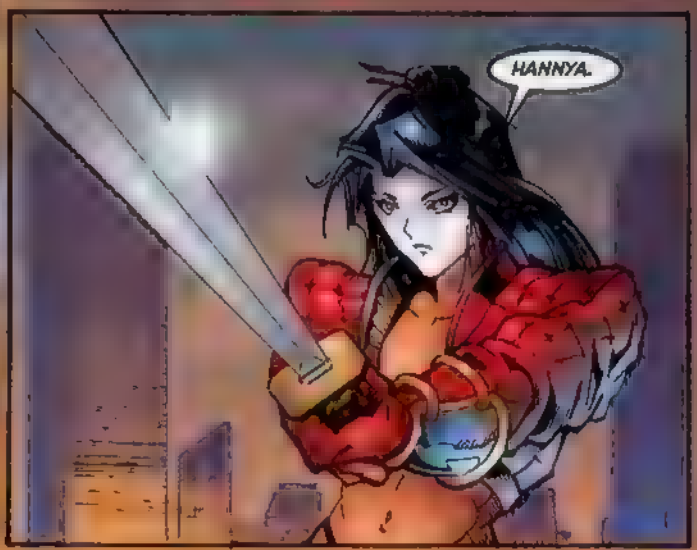
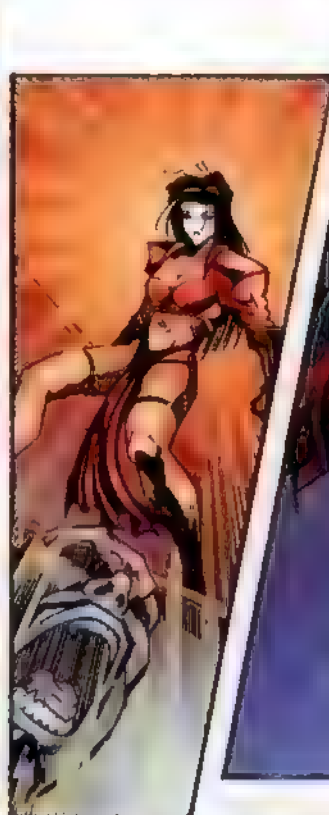
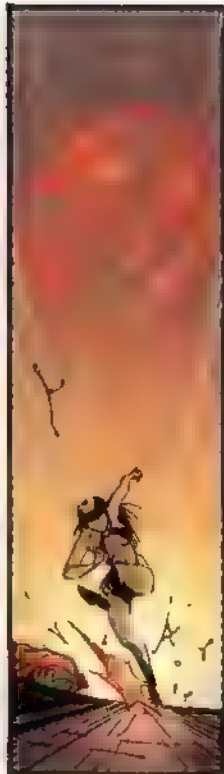
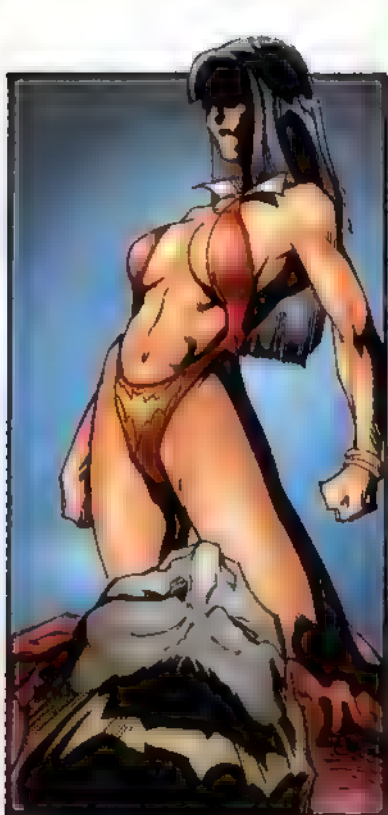


ANA ISHIKAWA SEES THAT
SHE CAN ACHIEVE SOMETHING
TONIGHT AFTER ALL.









ANA ISHIKAWA
IS NAMED "SHI"
WHEN COSTUMED
THIS WAY--
THE JAPANESE
FESTIVITIES.

SHE IS
NO LONGER
A KILLER.
BUT UNDEAD
ASSASSINATIONS
FROM BEYOND
THE GRAVE,
SOME OF THEM
DON'T COUNT

QUIT IT.

HELL, YOU'RE
FAST--

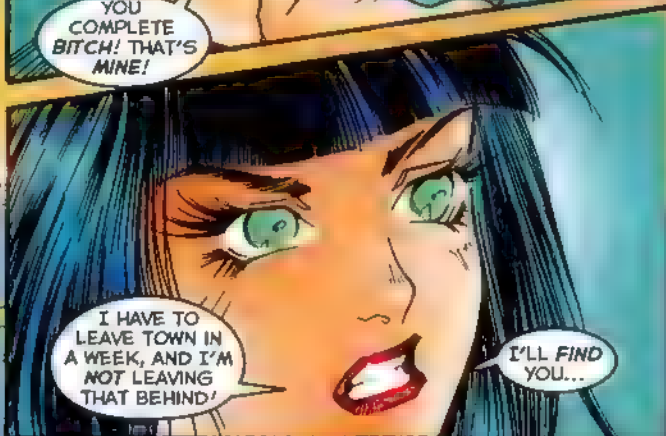
NGH

HSSSSSSSS

DAMN--

GRAAA

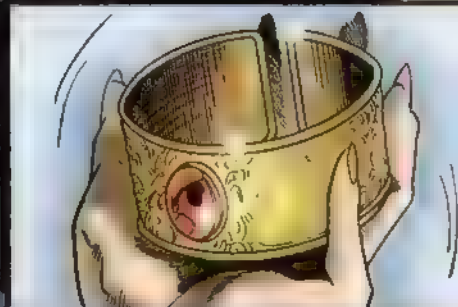
HEY--
GODDAMNIT,
THAT'S MINE--





IN RASHOMON, WATANABETSUNA
CUT OFF THE GHOST'S HAND,
AND RAN AWAY WITH IT.

'I WILL LEAVE MY HAND
WITH YOU FOR SEVEN DAYS,
AND I WILL GET IT BACK AFTER
THAT,' THE GHOST SHOUTED.



ANA ISHIKAWA FEELS LIKE
SHE'S BEEN RIPPED OUT OF
HER OWN LIFE STORY AND SHOVED
INTO SOMEONE ELSE'S BOOK.



ONE OF THOSE WEIRD,
GRUBBY BOOKS YOU SEE
ON THE TOP SHELVES OF
BOOKSTORES WITH SWEAT
ALL OVER THE WALLS.



"I HAVE TO LEAVE TOWN
IN A WEEK, AND I'M NOT
LEAVING THAT BEHIND!"

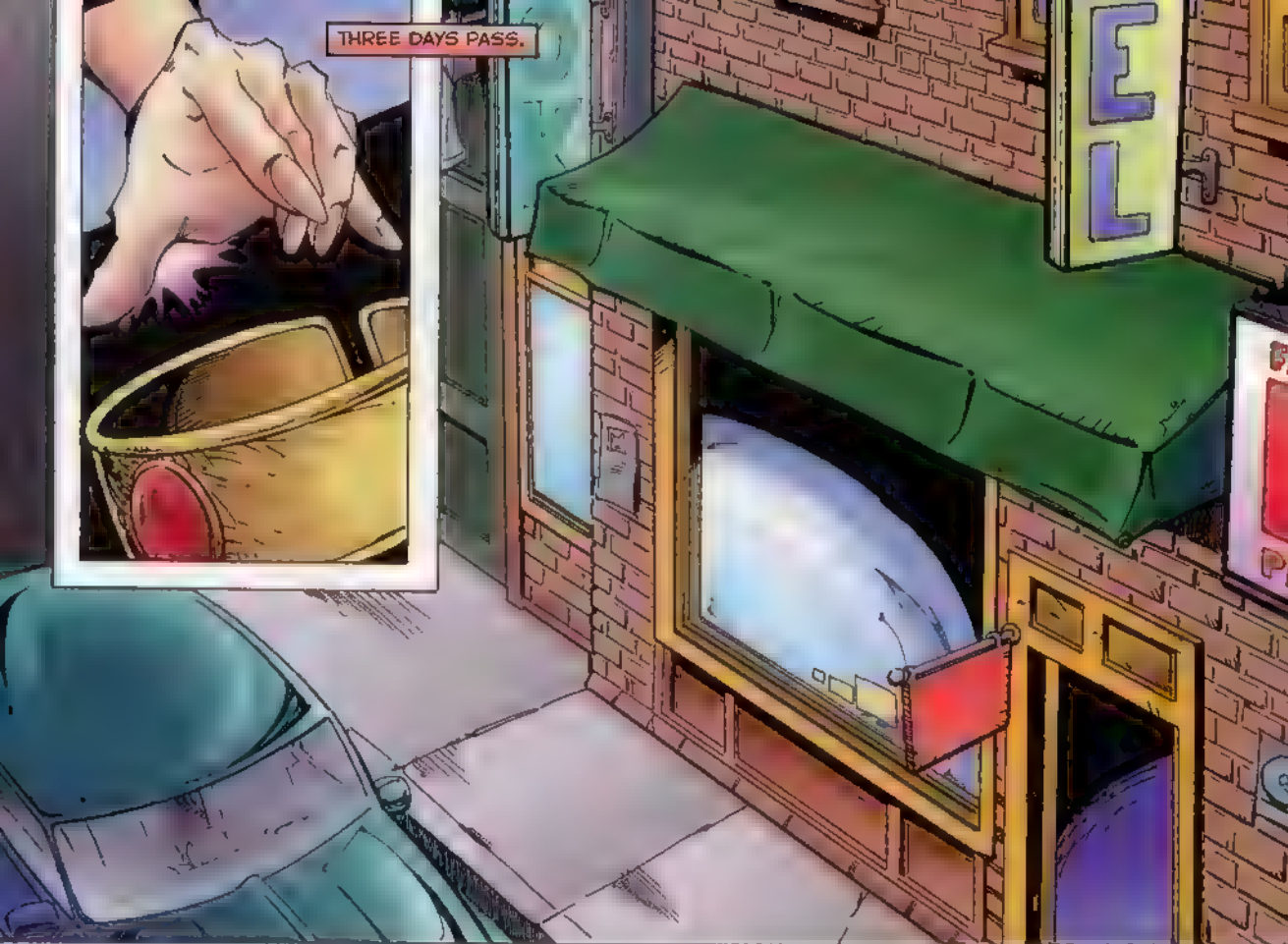
"I'LL FIND YOU..."



ALL ANA CAN DO IS KEEP
THE STRANGE BODY ORNAMENT
SAFE, AND THEN GO OUT TO
WORK LIKE A NORMAL PERSON.

AND THINK.

THREE DAYS PASS.



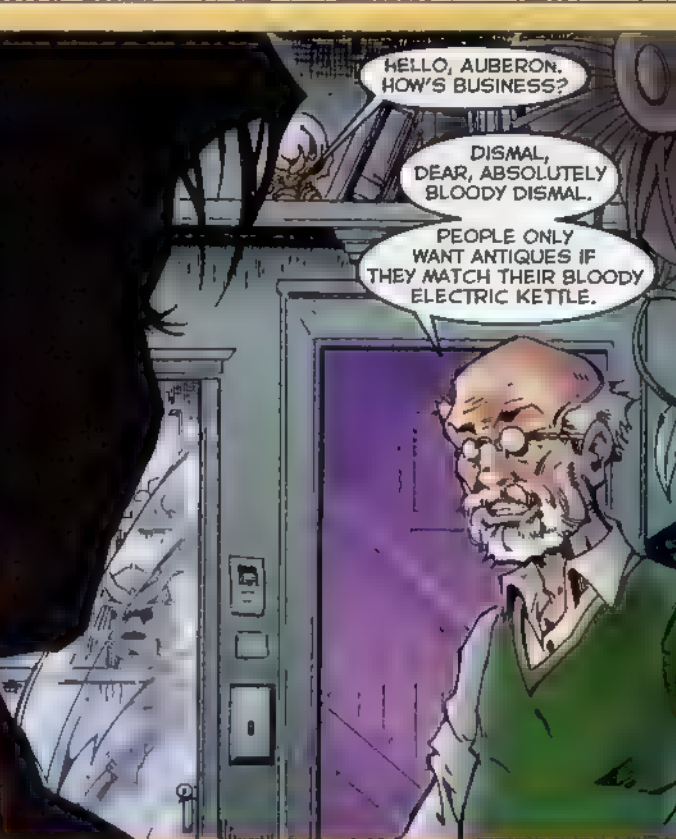
WELL, WELL.
ANA ISHIKAWA. IT'S
BEEN AN AGE, DEAR, AN
ABSOLUTE AGE.

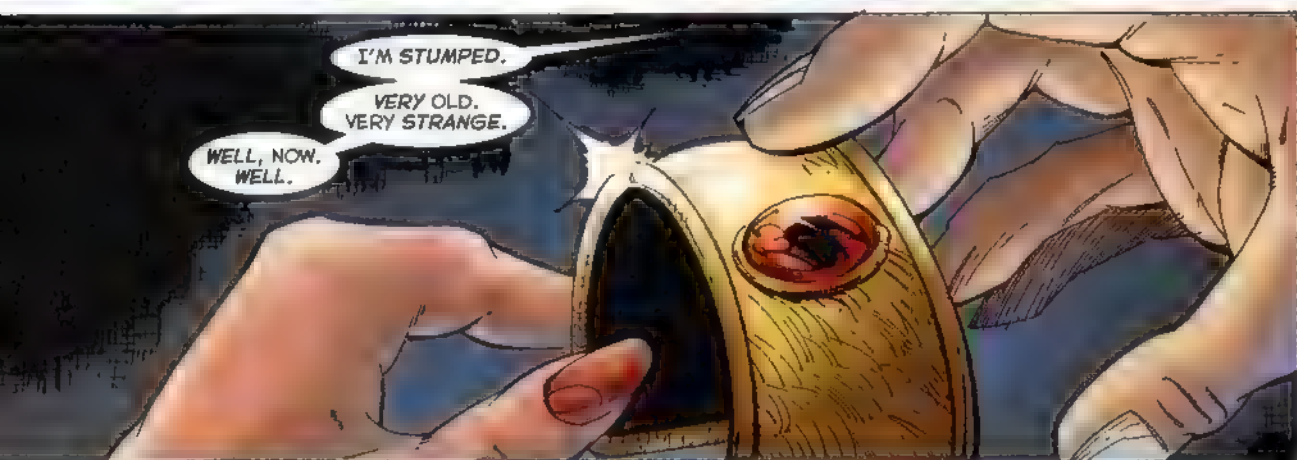
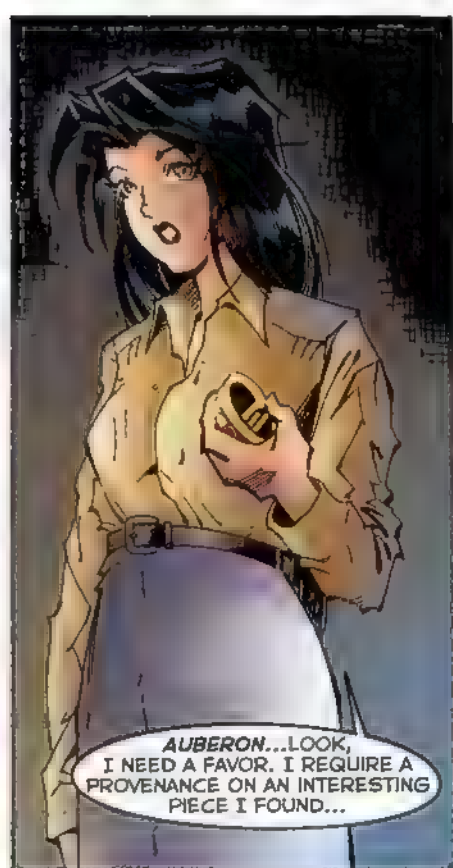
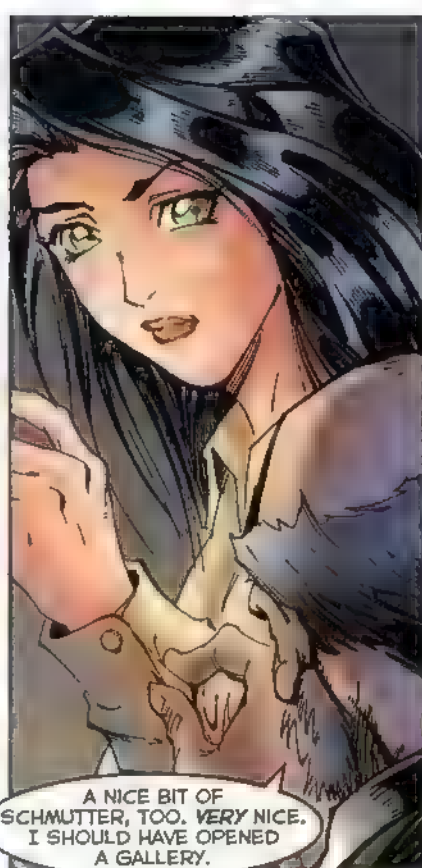
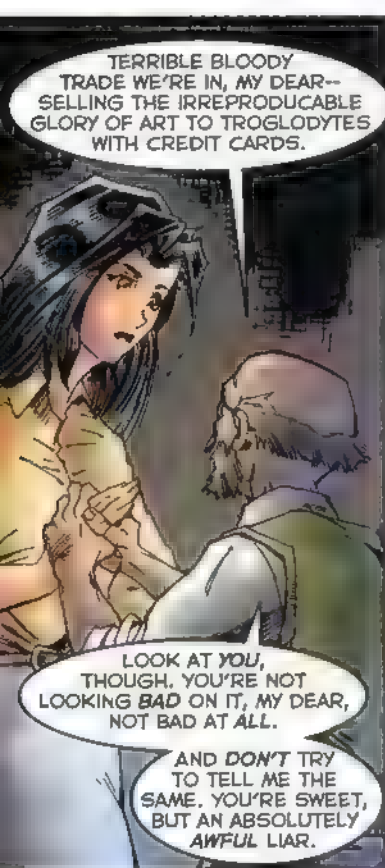


HELLO, AUBERON.
HOW'S BUSINESS?

DISMAL,
DEAR, ABSOLUTELY
BLOODY DISMAL.


PEOPLE ONLY
WANT ANTIQUES IF
THEY MATCH THEIR BLOODY
ELECTRIC KETTLE.







FOUR DAYS PASS.

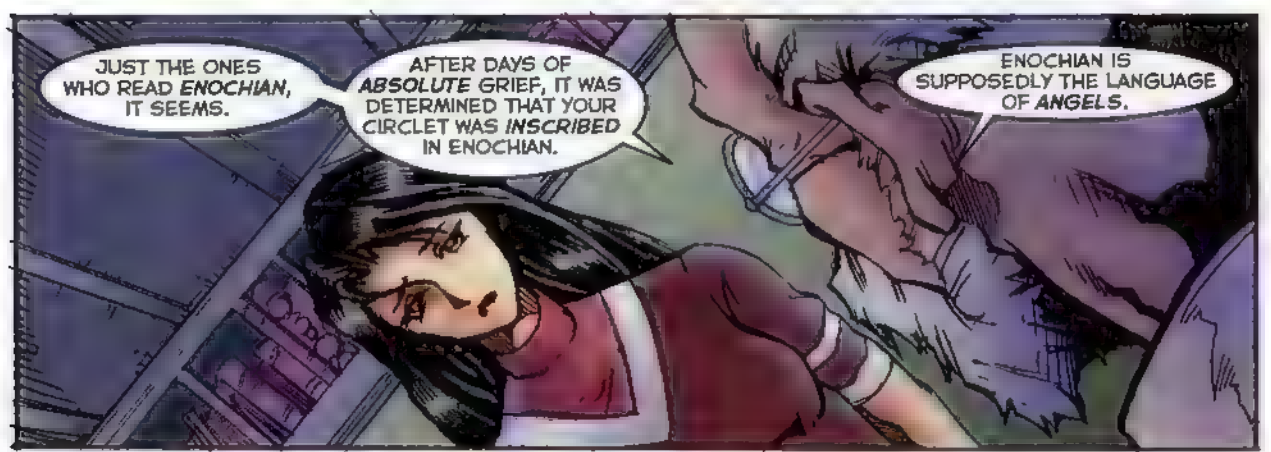


YOU OWE ME
SEVEN HUNDRED
DOLLARS.

OH?

THAT'S WHAT IT
COST ME TO GET THE
CIRCLET'S INSCRIPTION TRANSLATED--
INCLUDING AN HOUR WITH THE
PROSTITUTE OF HIS CHOICE.

GOOD GRIEF.
ARE ALL YOUR PROFESSIONAL
CONTACTS WHOREMONGERS? I HAD
NO IDEA, AUBERON.




JUST THE ONES
WHO READ ENOCHIAN,
IT SEEMS.

AFTER DAYS OF
ABSOLUTE GRIEF, IT WAS
DETERMINED THAT YOUR
CIRCLET WAS INSCRIBED
IN ENOCHIAN.

ENOCHIAN IS
SUPPOSEDLY THE LANGUAGE
OF ANGELS.



AS IN...



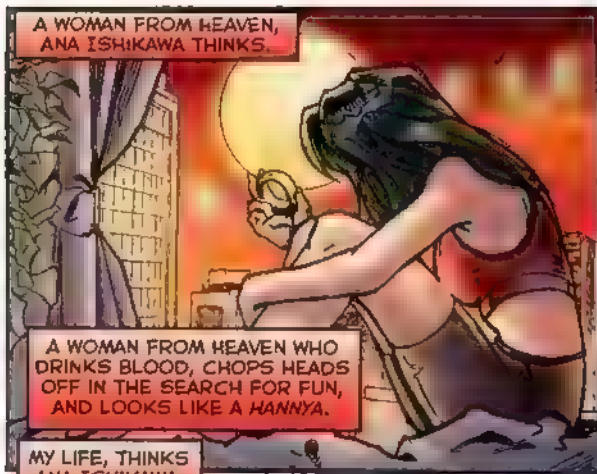
AS IN ANGELS,
AS IN CHRISTIAN MYTHOLOGY,
AS IN THE EARLIEST LANGUAGE
OF HEAVEN, ARE YOU
STILL WITH ME?

AND DO YOU
KNOW WHAT THE DAMNED
THING SAYS?



IT SAYS
'I WILL ALWAYS LOVE
YOU--MOTHER.'

THIS THING IS
OLDER THAN THE GODDAMN
PLANET EARTH, AND IT'S NO MORE
PROFOUND THAN A DRUNKEN
SAILOR'S NEW TATTOO!



A WOMAN FROM HEAVEN,
ANA ISHIKAWA THINKS.

A WOMAN FROM HEAVEN WHO
DRINKS BLOOD, CHOPS HEADS
OFF IN THE SEARCH FOR FUN,
AND LOOKS LIKE A HANNYA.

MY LIFE, THINKS
ANA ISHIKAWA,
IS FAR TOO
COMPLICATED.



ANA?
YOU HOME?

GIVE ME
A MINUTE,
PETER...



PETER, I THINK
YOU ACTUALLY LOOK
WORSE THAN YOU DID
A WEEK AGO.

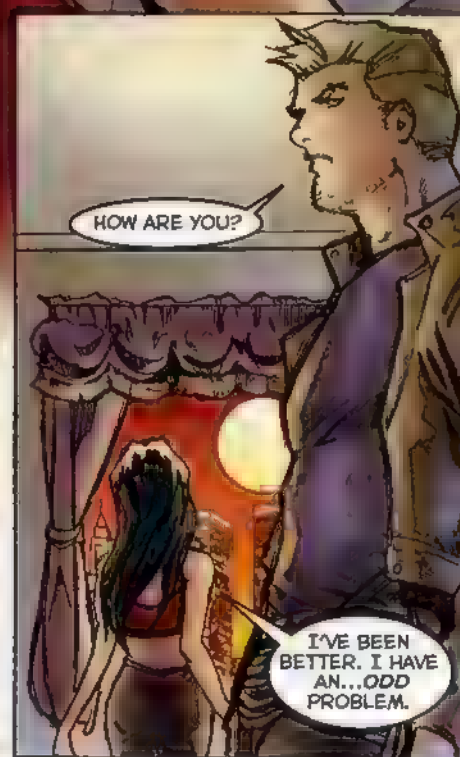
HEY, I'M
SELF-EMPLOYED NOW.
I GOTTA WORK THE HOURS
IT TAKES TO GET THE
JOB DONE.

CAN I
COME IN?



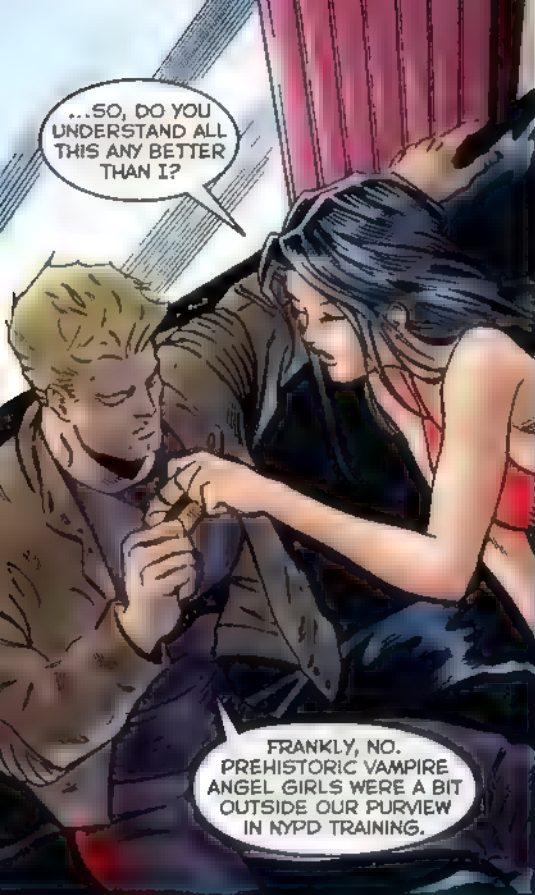
OF COURSE.
SILLY QUESTION.

I LIKE TO
BE INVITED IN.



HOW ARE YOU?

I'VE BEEN
BETTER. I HAVE
AN...ODD
PROBLEM.

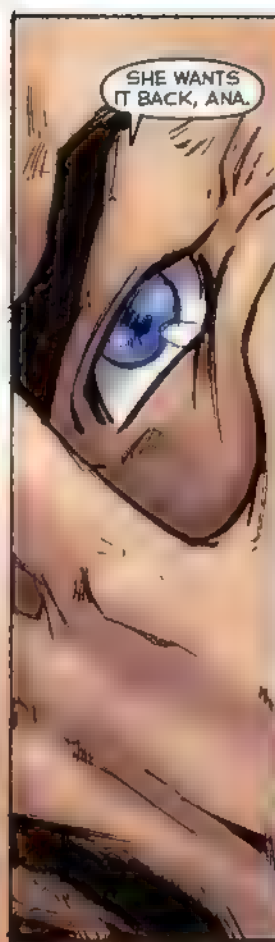




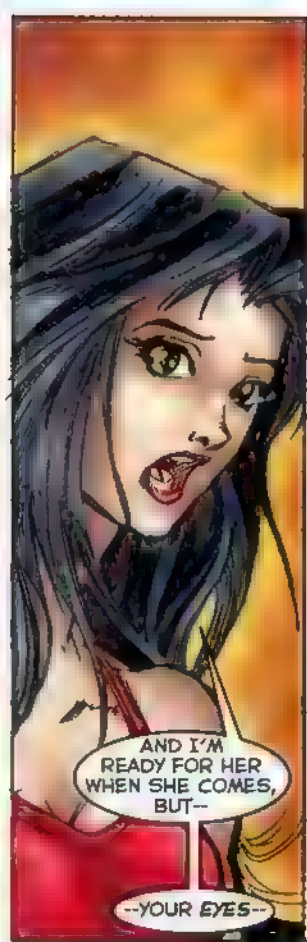
GIVE ME
IT BACK,
PETER.



I DON'T
KNOW WHAT YOU
THINK YOU'RE DOING, BUT
THAT STAYS HERE.

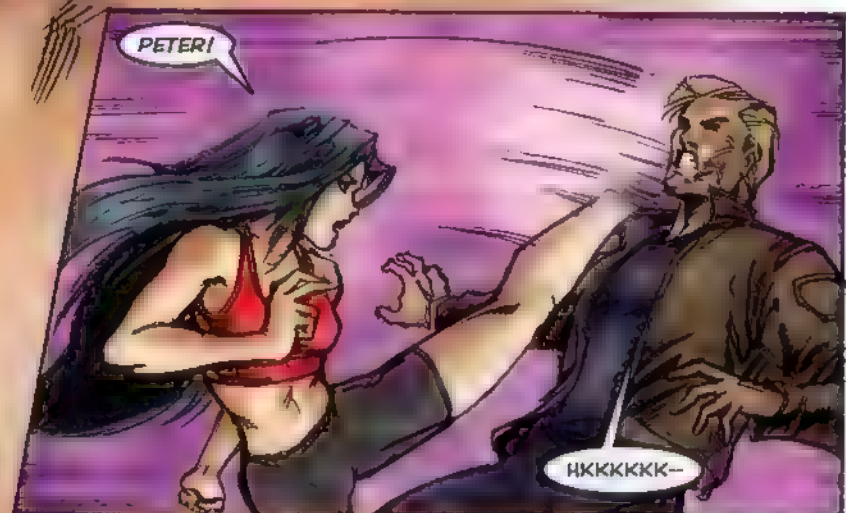
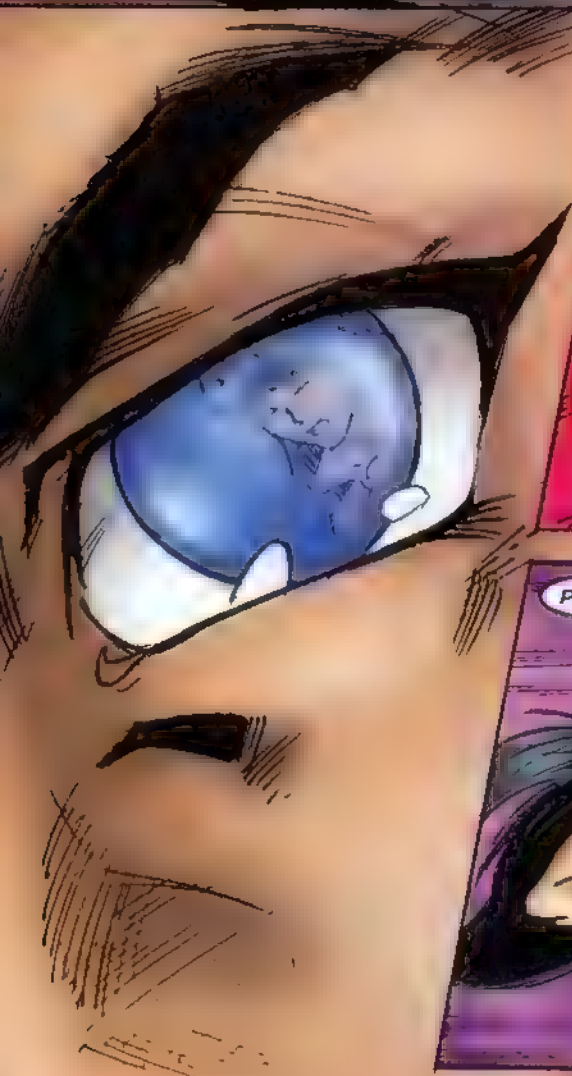


SHE WANTS
IT BACK, ANA.



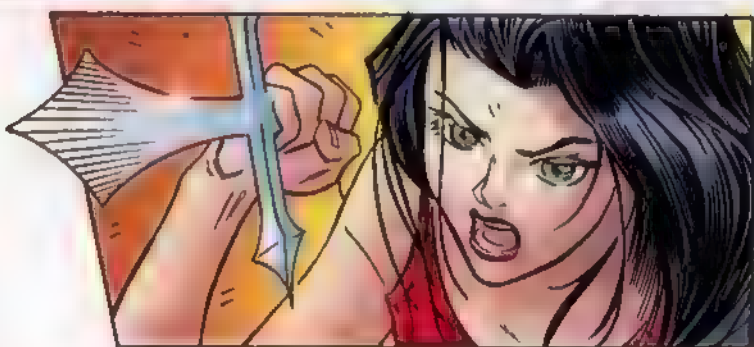
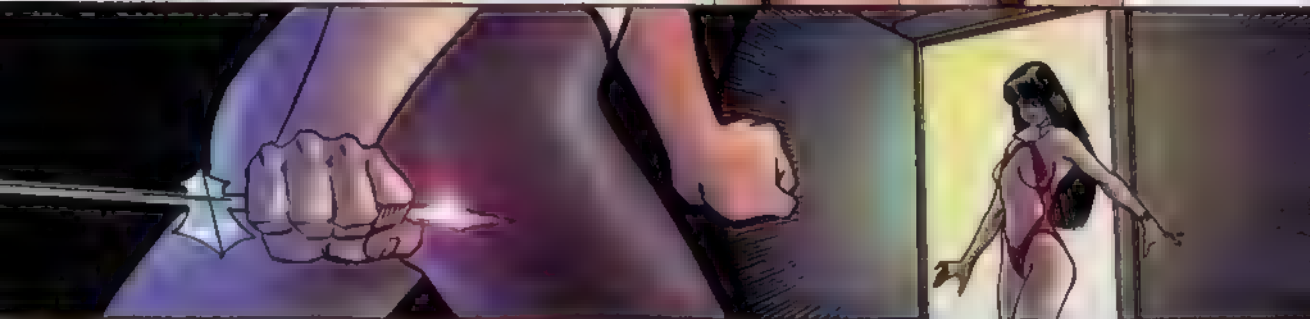
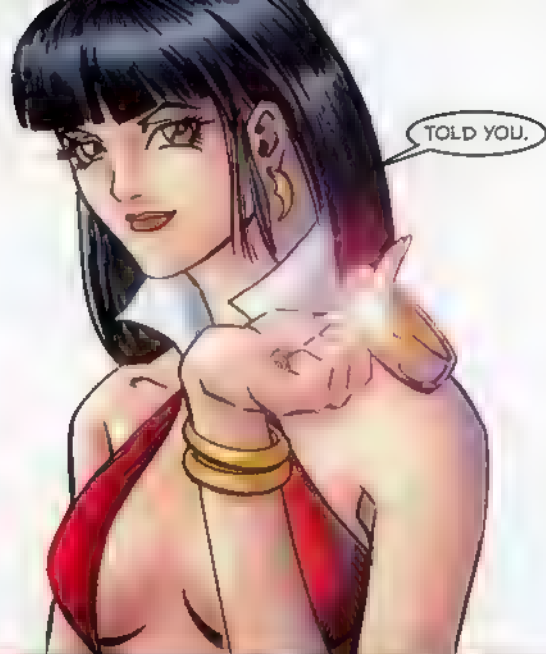
AND I'M
READY FOR HER
WHEN SHE COMES,
BUT--

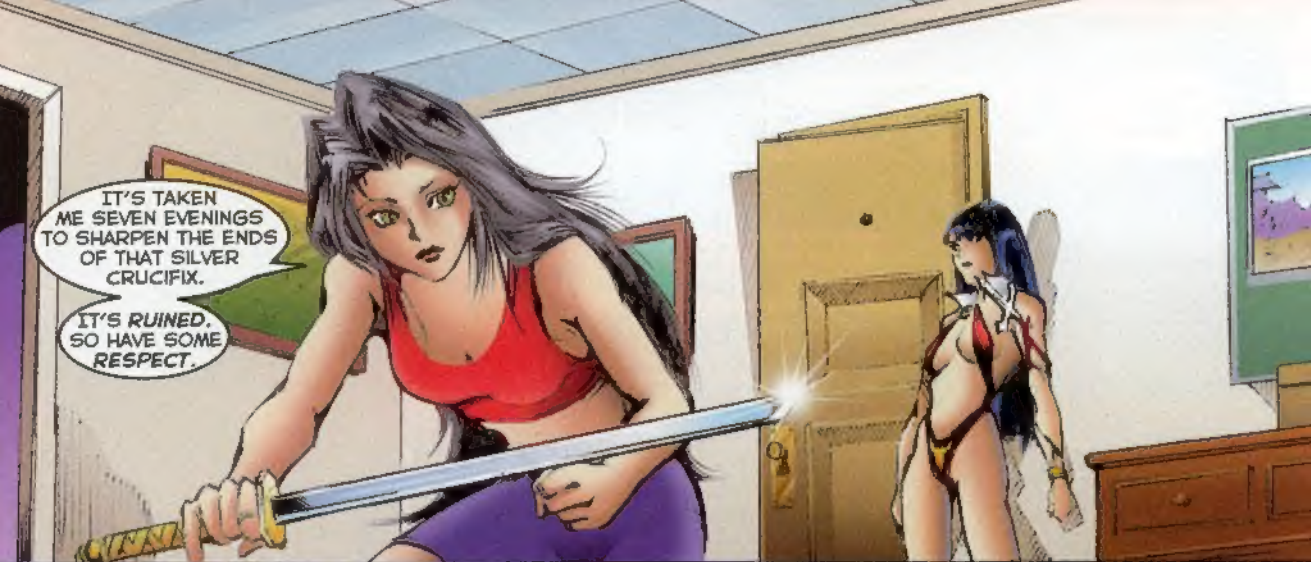
--YOUR EYES--



PETER!

HKKKKKK--





IT'S TAKEN ME SEVEN EVENINGS TO SHARPEN THE ENDS OF THAT SILVER CRUCIFIX.

IT'S RUINED. SO HAVE SOME RESPECT.



NOW WE TALK.

EXPLAIN THAT ARMLET'S INSCRIPTION.

...MY MOTHER GAVE IT TO ME. DO YOU KNOW CHRISTIAN MYTH?

CHRISTIANITY IS NOT A MYTH.



UH-HUH. ONE OF THOSE, HUH? OKAY.



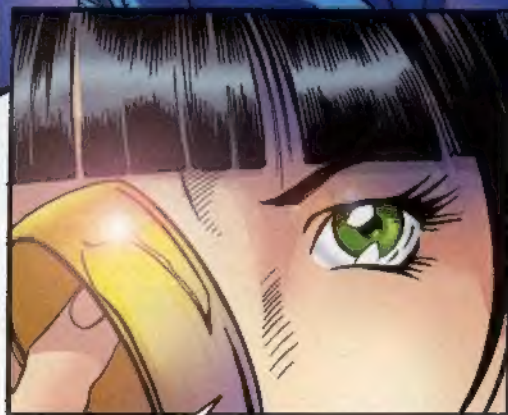
ADAM'S FIRST WIFE WAS A WOMAN CALLED LILITH, MADE OF THE EARTH AS HE WAS. SHE WAS CAST OUT OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN FOR REFUSING TO SUBMIT TO HIM.

ALONE AND DAMNED, LILITH WENT FROM THERE TO THE BANKS OF THE RIVER STYX, THERE TO FORNICATE WITH DEMONS AND SPAWN MORE THAN A HUNDRED CHILDREN A DAY.

"WHEN GOD SAW THIS, HE CURSED LILITH, KILLING ONE HUNDRED OF HER CHILDREN EACH DAY EVEN AS HE BEGAN TO POPULATE EARTH WITH ADAM AND EVE'S BRATS."

"SO LILITH SENT HER REMAINING CHILDREN TO EARTH, TO TORTURE AND MURDER ADAM AND EVE'S CHILDREN."

"LILITH'S CHILDREN WERE VAMPIRES. SHE WAS MY MOTHER."



IN HER LAST DAYS, LILITH REGRETTED ALL THIS, AND SOUGHT TO MAKE RESTITUTION.

SHE SELECTED HER FAVOURITE DAUGHTER-- THAT'S ME--AND WITH HER DYING BREATH BEGGED ME TO GO TO EARTH AND WIPE MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS FROM THE PLANET.

AND SHE GAVE ME THIS ARMLET; MY MOTHER'S LAST GIFT TO ME.





